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Message Text

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17
ACTION VOE-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 FBIE-00 INSE-00

NSAE-00 /023 W
---------- 046893
R 040948Z OCT 76
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9869
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 6698
E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CVIS SY LE
SUBJECT: VISA PROCESSING AT DAMASCUS - STATUS REPORT

REF: DAMASCUS 6247 (NOTAL)

1. IV OPERATIONS - 662 IVS ISSUED DAMASCUS IN SEPTEMBER. THREE REFUSALS INCLUDED TWO ON MEDICAL GROUNDS. VAST MAJORITY OF APPLICANTS REPRESENT BEIRUT BASES, ALL WHICH CONTINUE TO BE EXPEDITED. ALL APPLICANTS WHO HAVE REPORTED SELVES QUALIFIED UP TO OCTOBER 1 HAVE BEEN SCHEDULED FOR FINAL ACTION BY OCTOBER 30.

2. NIVS - WORKLOAD FOR SEPTEMBER WAS 960 OF WHICH ABOUT 70 PERCENT WERE LEBANESE CITIZENS. REFUSAL RATE ABOUT 17 PERCENT.

3. APPLICANTS HAVE CONTINUED ARRIVE FROM ALL PARTS OF LEBANON INCLUDING WEST BEIRUT AND TRIPOLI, BUT WE HAVE NOTICED IN PAST TWO WEEKS PARTICULARLY LARGE PROPORTION FROM ZAHLEH AREA IN BEKAA, ADJACENT TO SYRIAN BORDER, FOR WHOM ACCESS TO SYRIA IS NOW RELATIVELY EASY.

4. IV ISSUANCE RATE HAS MORE THAN DOUBLED OVER AUGUST. NIV WORKLOAD DOWN ABOUT 20 PERCENT FROM AUGUST, BUT STILL FOUR TIMES AVERAGE DAMASCUS DEMAND IN MONTHS PRIOR TO SUSPENSION BEIRUT VISA SERVICES. BELIEVE IT PREMATURE TO EXPECT FURTHER SIGNIFICANT DECREASE NIV WORKLOAD IN
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IMMEDIATE FUTURE; EVENTS MAY PROVE THAT EVEN IN LEBANESE

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SITUATIOSHSSEASONAL CYCLE WITH PEAK SUMMER DEMAND
MAY BE APPARENT, HOWEVER.

5. DAMASCUS VISACJEPTEMBER ACCOMPLISHED BY
CONSULAR SECTION WHICH NUMBERED 6 FSLS AT START OF MONTH,
ONE OF WHOM OCCPIED FULL TIME WITH AMERICAN SERVICES WORK,
BUT LOCAL STAFF HAD BEEN INCREASED TO 8 FSLS BY MID-
SEPTEMBER. CONSULAR OFFICERS NUMBERED TWO DURING ENTIRE
MONTH. CONSIDERABLE OVERTIME WAS OF COURSE NECESSARY BY
BOTH AMERICAN AND LOCAL STAFF, AND ANNUAL LEAVE WAS
IMPOSSIBLE.

6. THIRD CONSULAR OFFICER SCHEDULED ARRIVE OCTOBER 6.
MURPHY

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NNN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 OCT 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976DAMASC06698
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760373-0869
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761086/aaaacxaz.tel
Line Count: 75
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION VOE
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 DAMASCUS 6247
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: blochd0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 JAN 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: WITHDRAWN <02 Apr 2004 by morefirh, INA>; RELEASED <05 JAN 2005 by blochd0>; APPROVED <06 JAN 2005 by blochd0>
Review Markings:

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Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISA PROCESSING AT DAMASCUS - STATUS REPORT
TAGS: CVIS, SY, LE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006